

October 29, 2015

PMA-261 program support manager honored with Meritorious Civilian Service award



Toni L. Meier, director of Logistics Management Integration (AIR 6.6) at the Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR), right, presented product support manager (PSM) for PMA-261, Robert N. Leavitt, center, the Navy Meritorious Civilian Service award at the Logistics and Industrial Complex (LIC) at Pax River Oct. 20. Col. Hank E. Vanderborght, left, program manager for the H-53 Heavy lift helicopter (PMA-261) NAVAIR, praised Leavitt for his leadership and vision as a PSM.

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. — Toni L. Meier, director of Logistics Management Integration (AIR 6.6) at the Naval-Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) presented Robert N. Leavitt, the Navy Meritorious Civilian Service award during a ceremony at the Logistics and Industrial Complex (LIC), here, Oct. 20.

Leavitt is the product support manager (PSM) for NAVAIR's H-53 Heavy Lift Helicopter Program Office (PMA-261). Col. Hank E. Vanderborght, PMA-261 program manager, praised Leavitt for his leadership.

"Bob is in my eyes the premier PSM at the Naval Air Systems Command," Vanderborght said. "He is an outstanding leader and true visionary. He is leading Naval Aviation when it comes down to supporting and sustaining aircraft in the field. He has developed the FCOE (Fleet Common Operating Environment) for the H-53 and H-1. The FCOE is leading Naval Aviation to condition based maintenance (CBM+), which is a subset of sustainment analytics. Sustainment analytics allows the program to make the right business decisions

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on time, which is critical when dollars are extremely scarce. Bob's vision and efforts will revolutionize the way we support aircraft in the field, and pay large dividends to Naval Aviation for decades to come."

He facilitated the development of a tool for CBM+ – the Integrated Logistics and Support Management System (ILSMS), which is a data mining tool that aggregates 10 years' worth of historical data from 19 different databases to point leadership and analysts to the problem areas today and to proactively target these problem areas in the future.

Leavitt has developed a reputation for actively attacking readiness and affordability issues in the MH/CH-53E fleet. He has been praised for creating an environment to effectively and systematically apply analytical techniques to keep costs down and performance high throughout CH-53K development and continuing fleet operations.

He was the first product support manager for PMA-261 and strongly advocated for the use of Performance Based Logistics (PBL) to solve availability issues with ten high-value, flight-critical H-53 aircraft components. Using PBL, the team was able to increase the availability of these components by 49 percent and to reduce operating and support costs by \$20.2 million.

Leavitt began his 29-year career in the Marine Corps as a CH-53 pilot. He transitioned to civilian work and has been at Pax for the past 12 years as a contractor and a civilian, serving in various capacities including department head for design interface and maintenance planning (AIR 3.2), director of Sikorsky Repair and Overhaul and chief operating officer at Sierra Management and Technologies.

"I am most proud of bringing innovation to the H-53 Program and to NAVAIR, the growth of ILSMS from a program office tool to an enterprise tool is very rewarding," Leavitt said. "The introduction of advanced analytics through the FCOE, different approaches to delivering product support packages for the CH-53K and collaborating with such a dynamic and talented team have given me a great sense of accomplishment."

The successful work of Leavitt and the team at PMA-261 led to several awards including the 2014 Secretary of Defense PBL award in the component category and a 2011 NAVAIR Commander's National Award for Logistics and Industrial Operations.

Leavitt said he is committed to pass along institutional knowledge to the next generation and actively seeks out interns for PMA-261, especially wounded warriors.